

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/675,277

Examiner

Charlie Peng

Applicant(s)

MITCHELL ET AL.

Art Unit

2883

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to amendment filed on 29 April 2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 2-10 and 12-15.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 29 April 2005 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

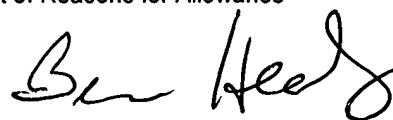
* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____


Brian Healy
Primary Examiner

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 5 and 12 are allowed. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance.

Independent claims 5 and 12 have been amended to include the indicated allowable subject matters in the previous office action. U.S. Patent 6,768,573 to Nishi et al. teach an optical switch having 4 columns of switch elements where each switch is capable of receiving and transmitting optical signals, and all received and transmitted optical signals are substantially in a same plane. The switches are crossbar switches capable of directing light signal in one of two directions: cross state or through state. Nishi does not teach that the optical switching is accomplished by blazing a switchable grating (or controlling a fringe tilt angle of the grating). This technique was only previously disclosed in U.S. Patent 6,795,601 to Mitchell et al. with a common assignee, and USC 103(c) precludes the patent as a prior art as part of a USC 103(a) claim rejection. It is the examiner's opinion that the prior art of record, taken alone or in combination, fails to disclose or render obvious in combination with the rest of the limitations of the base claim.

Independent claims 6, 7, and 13 have been amended to include the indicated allowable subject matters in the previous office action. Nishi et al. teach the invention except for the optical switching having elements numbering 1 more than sections, and the extra element is an output directing element. It is the examiner's opinion that the

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prior art of record, taken alone or in combination, fails to disclose or render obvious in combination with the rest of the limitations of the base claim.

Claims 2-4, 6-10, 14, and 15 are allowed by virtue of being dependent upon the allowed independent claims.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. U.S. Patent 6,748,130 to Oikawa.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Charlie Peng whose telephone number is (571) 272-2177. The examiner can normally be reached on 9 am - 6 pm M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Frank Font can be reached on (571) 272-2415. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Charlie Peng
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Brian Healy
Primary Examiner